



基督工人中心

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April 2024 Prayer Letter

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Peace to you in the Lord!

When you receive this letter, Easter has just passed! In the past years, Easter was mostly in April, but this year it was on the last day of March. Easter is a very important holiday for Christians, because it not only tells us that the Lord Jesus conquered sin and death through His resurrection, but also by His resurrection He became the first fruits of those who are asleep. Christ has risen, and one day we will also be raised up! It is because we believe in a true and living God, we are filled with joy and living hope as we live this short, sojourning life on earth.

The hymn "Some Golden Daybreak" came to my mind during the Passion Week. The lyrics said:

Some glorious morning sorrow will cease,
Some glorious morning all will be peace;
Heartaches all ended, school days all done,
Heaven will open—Jesus will come!

Some golden daybreak Jesus will come,
Some golden daybreak, battles all won,
He'll shout the victory, break through the blue,
Some golden daybreak, for me, for you!

Two days before Easter, before the sun had risen from the lake, I went to Pastor Ko's "Garden of Ministry" and meditated on the resurrection chapter of 1 Corinthians 15. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ...then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. ... Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not {in} vain in the Lord. " (15:52, 54, 58). It is so true! Because Christ has risen, we must do the work of the Lord more diligently, not only will our labor not be in vain and be remembered by the Lord, but one day each of us will stand before the throne of Christ and give an account to the Lord. When you come to the Center and visit Pastor Ko's garden of ministry, you will see that we have set up

Pastor Ko's lifelong belief: "The Longer I Serve Him, the Sweeter He grows" as a constant reminder to us.

The two to three years' pandemic gradually is behind us. Now we need to reorganize ourselves, restore our relationship with the Lord, and reorganize the church that has been affected by the pandemic. For this reason, this year's prayer letter theme will be "Turn to God for Revival". In this issue one of our board directors Brother Robert Kao will share "Suffer and Be Glorified with Christ":

Suffer and Be Glorified with Christ

Brother Robert Kao

Entering the new year 2024, we will continue to seek God's will. We see wars, turmoil, new variants of the coronavirus, environmental changes, and economic situations. We feel and experience a lot of suffering, as described in 1 Peter 4:12-13, "12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy." Let's think about how, during this time, we can return, repent, witness, experience, testify, flourish, and praise the Lord.

I. The source of joy comes from heaven

When experiencing the trial of fire or suffering with Christ, we should rejoice, just like the apostle Paul, who still rejoiced in the Lord even though he was in prison, " Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4) When Paul and Silas were imprisoned in the prison in the middle of the night, they still "prayed and sang hymns to God." Such a very special situation was not something ordinary people could do. The time was in the middle of the night. The place was an internal prison, and his body was wounded by a stick, and his feet were tied to wooden dogs. He was in pain and discomfort, but he was still worshiping and praising. " But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them." (Acts 16:25) They turned adversity, fear, and worry into worship and praise. This verse reminds us that the source of believers' joy comes from heaven and is not affected by earthly circumstances.

After our faith is tested, because of the Lord's love and grace, our faith can become stronger. Although we have not seen the Lord with our own eyes, we can love Him more, which strengthens our faith. Now, although we cannot see Him, we can believe in Him more. Blessed are those who believe without seeing Him. 1 Peter 1:6-9 also describes it clearly, "6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls."

What the apostle Paul was concerned about was not the difficulties he encountered or the possibility of martyrdom, but his conviction that whether he lived or died, he could

advance the gospel and reveal Christ. As mentioned in Philippians 1:20, "according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death." All situations in a believer's life are designed to reveal the life of Christ. This is the good work that God wants to accomplish, and it can be accomplished through prayer and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

II. The promise of God's presence through the Holy Spirit

When believers suffer, they can participate in the suffering of Christ, who endured the humiliation and went to the cross for us. Because "the Spirit of God's glory abides in you" points out the reason why believers are blessed to suffer for Him, and "the Spirit of God's glory" refers to the Holy Spirit, which can enable people to have a foretaste of the glory of God (Ephesians 1:14). Believers who suffer for Christ are blessed to receive the power of the Holy Spirit. This promise is mentioned in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 and Genesis 1:2. Also, "If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you." (1 Peter 4:14a), and "But even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you are blessed." (1 Peter 3:14a)

When we suffer persecution, the Holy Spirit is with us. This is what God has promised to us. " But he (Stephen), being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" (Acts 7:55-56) Stephen was a man who was always filled with the Holy Spirit. He always looked up and saw the Lord Himself, because the work of the Holy Spirit was to make people see the Lord Jesus.

Paul and Silas experienced the chains being loosened and falling off, which also illustrates that when our lives are changed, salvation is like an earthquake. The prison doors are fully opened, the chains are loosened, and light enters the darkness, causing people's Immediate lives to change. " But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake so that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed." (Acts 16:25-26)

III. Jesus Christ is the only foundation

The only foundation for us believers is Jesus Christ. No matter our life, work, gatherings, or service, we must take refuge in the Lord and let the Lord support us. Man's projects must go through fire-like tests and judgments (1 Peter 1:7, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15). Construction projects are not only based on the immediate results but also on whether they can survive until the Lord comes. In the future, our works will be tested at the judgment seat of Christ. Today, what we can know and master is the word of God. If we build according to the teachings of the Bible, our projects will be able to survive in that day. Our spiritual life in this world is salt and light, and our service needs to be based on the talents we have received from God (Matthew 25:14-30).

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Gal. 2:20) If we live by faith in the Son of God, it is faith in the Lord Jesus. No matter what the situation is, always put yourself in God's hands. Even

when the Lord Jesus went to the cross, he still believed in God's goodwill. It is this kind of faith that enables us to live on this earth!

IV. Be comforted by God and have a living hope

Believers suffer but can be comforted by God and have a living hope (2 Corinthians 1:3), and they can obtain an inheritance that is incorruptible and unfading. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," (1 Peter 1:3). We can also live a life that praises and glorifies Him (Nehemiah 9:5, Jeremiah 33: 9, Romans 15:9) " Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!" (Revelation 5:13b)

The final reminder is that when we are willing to turn around and repent, God will protect and revive us. In the future, everyone will face the judgment of sin before God, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23) "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment," (Hebrews 9:27) The Jewish house will face the first judgment before God. "Judgment will begin with the house of God" (1 Peter 4:17). "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus, we shall always be with the Lord." (1 Thessalonians 4:17) There is also the judgment at the judgment seat of Christ, " For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10)

But we know very well that God's love is not separated from us. Christ's love is a ransom for many. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45) Also, Romans 8:35-39 describes it very clearly, " Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake, we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Reference: Rev. Dr. Lim, Thian Seng, "Unwavering faith – A message for believers in the end times," 1 Peter Commentary, Chapter 14, <http://www.thenewperpect.org>, December 2022.)

Future Meetings:

(1) May Discipleship Training (5/19-24)

As we are praying for a spiritual revival upon us, we also need to respond to God by equipping ourselves for the Lord's use! At the end of the spring semester and before you prepare for the new school year, you can take the opportunity to participate the Discipleship Training and get equipped. The speakers of the May Discipleship Camp are: Pastor David Su, Pastor XiaoYuan and CWC coworkers. Pastor Su has taught in

the CWC Bible Camp many times in the past and all students were touched by his easy-to-remember Bible study method. After retiring from the church in New York two years ago, Pastor Su has devoted his time to writing books of Bible study methods and exegesis. This is the first time he is coming to teach the Discipleship Training. Pastor Su will be teaching a series in "Psalms" and "the discipleship training". And the evening revival messages will also be focused on Psalms. As to another speaker, Pastor Yuan, he responded to God's full time calling and gave up his beloved computer software job and went to a seminary to equip himself. Currently he is planting a church in Washington, D.C. He is going to teach from the books of "Nehemiah", "Philippians". For the evening revival messages, he will share: "Are You Still Following?" and "The Grain of Wheat that Fell into the Earth". By looking at these topics that I myself, an old Christian, am also looking forward to the messages. The CWC Discipleship Training is systematically making of disciples. And these five days of study will be a good investment in your pursuit of God in your whole life. So, please don't miss it. Not only you yourself attend, but also invite your spiritual companions in the church to pursue the Lord together. [The registration form has been posted on CWC website](#). Registration deadline is :May 17.

(2) Memorial Weekend Lay-Minister Training (5/24-27)

Memorial Long Weekend Lay-Minister Training is especially reserved and prepared for believers who are working full time. In addition to the above two speakers, Elder Johnson Lee will be another speaker. After receiving his Ph.D. from Stanford University, Elder Lee has been working in the Bay Area, California, and has faithfully served in the church. Later he was ordained as the church elder. Elder Lee took early retirement and is now serving in CCIC-Cupertino. He is certainly a great role model for all who are working full-time. In this camp, Pastor Su will share "Daniel and His Three Friends", "God's Guidance, God's Discipline", and continue to share Psalms in the evenings revival message. Pastor Yuan will share "Work is God's Calling", "Educating Soul, Nurturing Heart, and Nurturing Faith - Helping Students to Grow". And Elder Lee will share "Self-Identification and Direction", "Serving as a Lay Minister", "Serving as a Family", "Making Good Use of Your Resources", etc. Since this is a short training camp, the meeting will start on Friday evening with revival messages. We request full-time attendance. Please consider taking one day off from work on May 24 so that you can arrive at the Center on time before 5:30 p.m. [The registration form has been posted on CWC website](#). Please not only attend by yourself, but also invite your spiritual companions in your church to pursue the Lord together. Please click here for registration. The application deadline is: May 17.

(3) June Youth Camp (6/9-15)

The most anticipated youth camp will be held from June 9 to 15. This year we have a number of speakers: Brother Edwin Lin and his wife Elanor Lin from California, and Pastor Berry Edwards from Warsaw, MO will teach. Pastor Berry Edwards is a former math teacher at Warsaw High School and is now the senior pastor of Cedar Grove Baptist Church, the biggest church in Warsaw. Pastor Edwards has often come to teach in the youth camp. Edwin Lin and his wife, Elanor, were also speakers at the camp last year, and their wonderful teamwork and care for young people was quite impressive to

all. Born in Singapore and raised in the Bay Area, California, Edwin became a Christian in high school and laid the foundation of his faith in college through Campus Crusade. Born into a Christian family, Elanor decided to commit to Christ after a short mission trip to Mexico, and after graduating from high school, she spent a year studying at Colorado Bible School, where she sparked a love of Bible reading and a lifelong desire to study and teach the Bible. Edwin currently teaches in the Department of Sociology at UC Berkeley, is a debate coach at the King's Academy, and holds a master's degree from Western Seminary. He loves teaching the Bible and making disciples. Elanor now serves as youth minister at the CCIC- Cupertino. The theme for this year's Youth Camp is taken from Colossians 3:1-3, "The View from Above", which will encourage youths that if we could see ourselves from God's point of view, it would transform our perspective about the big life-change decision. In addition to the water activities that youths love, there will be one afternoon of evangelism that we will go to surrounding nursing homes for mission. This year we will still make T-shirts. The details will soon be posted online. Parents, please encourage your youths to sign up as early as possible.

(4) August Bible Camp (7/28-8/3)

This time we are going to study "the Life of Christ – The Four Gospels". If you are interested in participating the camp, the syllabus and the application form have already been posted on the website, you may download it. In addition to Pastor Daniel Shen, Sister Grace Lee will come to teach. We might have listened to Sister Lee's incisive sharing on video in the past 4 years since 2020. Sister Lee will come back and lead the Bible Camp in person this year. I believe that for the new students (who have only seen Sister Lee on video) and the old students, all will be looking forward to seeing Sister Lee again. So Please do not miss this precious opportunity. Strict deadline is 6/15. [Click here for detailed information.](#)

Sunday Online Bible Study & Prayer Meeting (Please note the Zoom ID and passcode are changed)

During the pandemic, many churches' meetings were held online, that was why Pastor Ko started this Sunday evening Bible study and prayer meeting to lead brothers and sisters continue to have a life of Bible reading, prayer, and spiritual sharing. After the August Bible Camp, CWC coworkers have decided to utilize this platform, not only to help brothers and sisters to prepare for the next Bible Camp (we will teach how to study the Bible, how to do the outlines, and how to write the assigned topic reports), but also spend some time to pray for the need of CWC ministry. We will shorten the meeting to one hour (7:00-8:00PM CT) so that it will not affect your next day schedule. We will study "Life of the Christ – The Four Gospels". Zoom ID is: 85888709271, passcode: 567482. Please come and study the Bible together that we will be equipped in the Lord.

Thanksgiving and Prayer Requests

1. Please pray for us to find a venue for this year's Winter Conference that the Lord will not only open the way for us, but also give us a clear idea of where God is leading us.
2. Thanksgiving for the March Gospel Camp with five gospel friends who have accepted

Jesus as their Savior. Please pray for the churches' follow-up to these new believers in spiritual growth in the Lord.

3. Some parts of the roof of coworker's dormitory got worn-out over the years and started leaking. Please pray for the repair this month and the over \$10,000 funds needed for repair.

4. Please continue to pray for the preparation for the May Discipleship Training, the May Lay-minister Training, the June Youth Camp, and the August Bible Camp. Pray for brothers and sisters to prepare their hearts for the meetings.

5. For Coworkers:

- Mrs. Ko: Thanks to the Lord and thank brothers and sisters for your prayers. My grandson Levi's heart surgery went well on March 8. Please continue to pray for his recovery, recuperation and the future treatment plan. Please also pray for me that I have enough physical strength to take care of Levi, and also for strength from the Lord to run the course ahead of me.
- Sister Cindy Chiang: Praise the Lord! The busy January to March has passed. However, there are still many back up load of work and unexpected tasks that need to be done. Please pray that I will have wisdom and knowledge from the above and make good use of the time each day when I continue serving Him on campus' ministry on weekends, CWC administrative work, and the preparation for all future meetings.
- Brother Qinglong Liang: Pray that the Lord will give me a heart of total obedience to the Holy Spirit serving Him at home, in church, and at CWC according to His will. Please also pray for my wife when she home schools the children and serve in the children's ministry in the church; also pray for the green card application process.
- Pastor Charles Huang: Pray that the Lord grants me with His Word and wisdom shepherding the church in Champaign; lead the church in campus ministry; raise my children with God's wisdom; also give my wife wisdom and physical strength serving in the church. Please pray for the salvation of my parents who are in Taiwan.
- American coworker Scott Jerome: The eldest daughter, Chiara, is due to give birth on April 20th, please pray for a smooth delivery. And pray for the health of Scott's parents.

6. Pray for the CWC monthly financial need (General fund, Building fund, Training fund, etc.) asking the Lord to manifest His abundant provision and allow more brothers and sisters to experience the blessings of giving.⁷

7. For CWC: Pray that the Lord will bring more co-workers to the CWC ministry for the furtherance of the gospel ministry in the Midwest.

Emmanuel
In the Lord,
Sister Cindy Chiang